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SKETCHES OF SPANISH AMERICA.

THE history of the colonisation of the two great divisions of America, their progress in civilisation, and their present condition, are, to the thoughtful man, subjects of the deepest interest, and offer to him a wide field for observation and inquiry. History loses here her dry formality and tedious details, and becomes a gorgeous romance filled with a succession of wild tales and striking incidents unparalleled in older and more prosaic countries. The most superficial observer is struck by the strange discrepancies and singular differences presented by the two great continents of North and South America; and, tracing back their history, we find in every portion of it the same opposing features. The early settlers on the northern continent were men of peace, who sought a refuge from religious or political persecution in their own countries; and who, in their newly acquired territory, practised only the arts of peace, anxiously avoiding collision with its wild inhabitants. Gradually the ancient forests fell before the sturdy pioneers, and fruitful fields and thriving towns flourished in their stead. The towns became mighty cities; the infant settlements grew into great states; and the little colony of fugitives rapidly expanded into a powerful nation, whose fleets now cover the once solitary ocean, whose railways pierce the trackless forests, and whose countless steamboats rudely break the silence that has for ages brooded over the vast lakes and noble rivers, turning their gloomy solitudes into great highways of commerce, and planting on their banks new towns, and fertile farms, and thriving villages. But the peaceful invaders have driven the Indian from his home; tribe after tribe have disappeared from the land of their forefathers; the pale-face dwells in the villages of the red-skin; and the plough glides smoothly over his deserted hunting-ground.

How different is the history and present aspect of the southern continent! How slight the resemblance between the first European settlers in the two countries! Between the pilgrim fathers and their exiled families, seeking only a quiet shelter, and coveting no treasure save the produce of their own toil, and the Spanish leaders, with their ruffian bands, burning with the thirst for gold, and, in their eagerness to allay it, slaughtering hundreds of thousands of the unoffending and half-civilised inhabitants, destroying their cities, devastating their country, and spreading ruin and desolation wherever they appeared. But whilst the emigrant Anglo-Saxon quietly ejected the Indian from his territory, and gradually became sole master of the land, the warlike and victorious Spaniard, over-burdened by his stolen riches, sank into apathy and indolence. The blood of the conquered and the conquerors mingled in their descendants; and the broken nations of Mexico and Peru, though at first slaves to the victors, became, by degrees, amalgamated with them. The mixed breed thus produced assumed an important place in the fabric of society; and though the man of pure Spanish descent still claims the first position, and pretends to be the aristocrat of the republic, yet few of the most wealthy, and scarce any of the middle and wealth-producing classes, are without a tinge of Indian blood.

The Indians of the mountainous districts still retain the language and many of the customs of their fathers; and in some instances, the ancient dislike to the invaders has descended to them. But the inhabitants of the low country present a singular mixture of races and of customs, and, though speaking one language, mingle the manners of the Moor, the Spaniard, and the aboriginal Peruvian. Their cities, too, exhibit in their architecture the same confusion. The streets, in Spanish fashion, crossing at right angles, enclose in the squares or *cuadras*, houses with all the peculiarities of Madrid, large, roomy, and secluded in deep courtyards. The centre of the city is occupied by the great square, on one side of which towers the magnificent cathedral richly decorated with Moresco ornament, and on another stands the palace of the government, plain, massive, and strong, fashioned like the stately residences of the royal

Incas, the ruins of which still exist in the city of Cuzco, the ancient capital of Peru.

Since the Spanish colonies threw off the yoke and declared themselves independent republics, they have been subject to repeated political convulsions and to frequent changes of government. But the revolutions have been usually short-lived, and governments have risen and been overturned with a rapidity unknown in other nations. Yet, amidst all these changes, society has remained the same; and though the influx of foreigners has introduced into it a new element, it continues to run on in its old channel; and Peru, with a thoroughly republican and democratic form of government, retains in all its social institutions the very essence of conservatism. With these peculiar characteristics, the manners of the Peruvians, their social usages, and domestic habits offer attractions to the traveller rarely found in more modernised communities; and the advantage of a short but familiar residence among them enables me to give, from personal observation, a sketch of these peculiarities.

The tract of country lying between the Andes and the Pacific is called Las Valles, and that included in the range of mountains La Montana. The former of these, to which we will at present confine ourselves, is more essentially Spanish than the high country, contains more of the appliances of civilisation, and exercises a greater influence over the destinies of the republic.

Entering the country by its chief sea-port, Callao, we drop anchor in the bay opposite the town, and proceed to examine the strange scene which has suddenly opened to us. On one side of the harbour rises the lofty island of San Lorenzo, a huge barren rock, fourteen miles in circumference, and nearly fourteen hundred feet in height, abounding with seals and sea-lions, and the resort of innumerable sea-fowl, especially pelicans, of which thousands are seen hovering over the bay, flying fearlessly among the shipping, and occasionally diving with great velocity in search of fish. Stretching from the town towards San Lorenzo is a long, low, sandy point, on which Callao once stood before its destruction by the great earthquake of 1630. Numbers of strong arches of burnt bricks remain nearly level with the ground; and beneath these many excavations have been made by treasure-seekers in search of the wealth supposed to be buried in the ruins. These excavations are now filled with skulls and bones, the remains of those who were driven out of the fortress as useless mouths during its siege in the war of independence; and who either crawled into these recesses to perish miserably by famine, or—happier fate—died beneath the fire of the attacking fleet. The government disgracefully allows these ghastly mementoes of war to remain unburied and uncared for. The fortress of Callao—Castillo de la Independencia—is the largest and strongest fortification in South America, and at one time mounted four hundred pieces of cannon; but it does not now contain more than one hundred and twenty. For eighteen months after the declaration of independence, the flag of Spain waved over this solitary castle. During the whole of that period it was strongly besieged both by sea and land—the republican fleet being commanded by Lord Cochrane—and it was only after the original garrison of four thousand men had been reduced by famine and disease to a miserable remnant of two hundred, that the Spanish General Rodil surrendered. He capitulated on the 19th of February, 1826, and with him fell the Spanish power in South America—the last vestige of that once mighty empire. The fort is now more usefully employed as a bonded store, and casks and bales of merchandise replace the murderous piles of shot and shells. In one part of it are two dark, gloomy, and unhealthy vaults used as criminal prisons, and these are seldom untenanted by English sailors, sent there by the consul for some petty breach of discipline. I remember, on my first visit to this prison, being amused by seeing one of the soldiers on guard seated on a bench mending his wife's gown, while she sat on the ground beside him comfortably smoking a cigar.

The attention of the stranger in Callao is immediately attracted by the number of flag-staffs scattered over the town,

each pole being crowned by a large bird, called by the Spaniards *Gallinazo á cabeza colorada* (red-headed vulture), but known to English sailors as the turkey-buzzard. The streets and the roofs of the houses abound with these birds, which are the scavengers of the coast towns; and their services are much needed, for the inhabitants—according to our notions of cleanliness—are extremely filthy in their habits. Callao, in common with all the smaller Peruvian towns, presents to the traveller a mean and rather disagreeable aspect, arising from the lowness of the houses, the universally flat roofs, and the temporary structure of the buildings. The majority of the houses are mere sheds of reeds plastered with clay and roofed with grass matting; few of them possess the luxury of a glass window, and none of the meaner ones contain a fire-place; in many, the window is in the roof, a square opening, into which is fitted a wooden grating that can be raised or lowered at pleasure by a small line, which, passing over a pulley, hangs down in the middle of the room. But the frequency of earthquakes accounts for this slight style of building, and the total absence of rain renders sloping roofs and waterproof walls unnecessary. Every port on both the coasts of South America possesses its *piscatoria*, or “fisherman’s bay,” as the word is literally translated. This is the lowest part of the town, the Spanish Alsatia, where all the ruffians and vagabonds are located. In Callao the *piscatoria* is composed of rows of huts, built of reeds alone, without plaster, many of them wanting roofs, and all exceedingly well ventilated. Into this district it is dangerous for a well-dressed man to venture after night-fall, for the long knife of the Indian cholo is a ready weapon and is used with but scant ceremony.

The mole or landing-place at Callao is usually blocked up by huge heaps of wheat imported from Chili, and thrown loose upon the ground, with no other covering than a few mats spread carelessly over it to protect the grain from the heavy night dews. Surrounding these heaps are rows of *botigas* filled with *Italia* or *pisco*, a strong colourless spirit distilled from grapes, and chiefly obtained from the port of Pisco—whence its name. The *botiga* is an earthen jar, in shape resembling a pear, pointed at the lower end and gradually increasing in bulk to the top, which is rounded over and ends in a narrow mouth-piece. This singular shape necessitates a constant reclining position, but it is found the most convenient for the mode of conveyance universally adopted—the backs of mules and asses. On each side of the pack-saddle is an iron hoop, in which the *botiga* is placed with the small end downwards; and in this manner spirits, oil, and other liquids, are conveyed across the trackless desert on the coast, and over the shapeless roads and frightful chasms of the snow-crowned Cordillera. The frequent accidents to which the *botigas* are liable from the falling of the mules, or from the collisions which ensue in the desperate rush that occurs on reaching water in the desert, have caused the occasional substitution of goat-skins as a means of conveyance. The mode of obtaining these skins is most barbarous. The goat is hung up alive by the horns, and an incision being made round the neck, the skin is torn off the struggling animal in such a manner that it forms a bag having only one seam. It is asserted that the skin is more easily stripped in this form when the animal is alive, and that the bags are also more durable; but such slight advantages do not warrant the detestable cruelty of the process. Wheeled carriages are rarely seen beyond the limits of the towns; and even between Callao and Lima, a distance of only seven miles over a tolerably level road, troops of asses are the chief means of transport. But the *boricas* (asses) with their picturesque drivers, and the six-horsed omnibuses which conveyed passengers between the port and city, will now be superseded by the railway recently opened; the first, and, I believe, the only one, in South America. A little incident connected with this railway is worth recording. During the progress of the works, the engineer, an Englishman, was taken seriously ill, and, his brain being affected, he was ultimately ordered home. The consequence was that the proceedings were at once suspended, and the completion of the miniature railway was delayed

until the arrival of another foreign engineer, as, throughout the puissant republic, not a single man could be found to carry on the work—road-making being a science not commonly taught in the schools of Lima.

Pending the completion of the railway, we leave Callao in an airy omnibus driven by a negro, the six horses running three abreast. The carriage resounds with a perfect Babel of languages, and the faces of the passengers present every shade of colour, varying from the ruddy cheeks of the newly-arrived German, and the pallid countenance of the creole, to the rich brown of the *mestizo*, and the jetty black of the woolly-headed *zambo*. As we enter the high road, we notice on the left a stone obelisk that marks the spot to which a large frigate was carried from the harbour in the disastrous earthquake of 1746. On a small eminence to the right are the ruins of an old fort, above which stands the village of Bonavista, the barracks, and an English hospital. The road now enters the *pampas*, or, more correctly, the “plateau del Calloa,” an undulating plain plentifully watered by little rivulets, but producing only harsh grass diversified by a field of stunted maize or a plantation of spreading plantains. The ground is covered with a yellow sulphurous powder strongly impregnated with nitre, and at a few miles distance are some extensive saltpetre works. From the absence of rain, the road is knee-deep in dust, and the troops of asses which we pass, and the cavalcades of horsemen who pass us, are completely enveloped in white clouds.

The compact little horses of the cavaliers move rapidly over the ground at a long swinging pace, an easy run, which never breaks into a gallop or subsides into the English trot. In fact, the latter pace is considered a great defect, and the horses are carefully trained to avoid it. Every horseman wears the poncho—a square cloak with a hole in the middle, through which the head is passed, the folds falling over the chest, shoulders, and back. This article of dress, common throughout the Spanish republics, is, in Peru, often made of the finest alpaca wool, and dyed in the most brilliant colours; and the cavalier, enveloped in one of these gaudy cloaks, with his head covered by a finely-worked Panama sombrero, has a very picturesque appearance. His horse is hidden beneath a profusion of coloured wool and leather fringes, with a multitude of straps and silver buckles. The heavy stirrups are of wood, beautifully carved and inlaid with silver, whilst his spurs of the same metal are of a most preposterous length, and terminate in rowels of three or four inches diameter. A full-sized pair of spurs contains three marks, or a pound and a half of silver.

Half way to Lima, the conveyance stops for a few minutes to water the horses. Here is a *pulperia*—a union of a dram-shop and a general store,—and close to it stands a deserted convent and the old church of *La Virgen del Carmen*, with the usual accompaniment of a small picture of the crucifixion placed on a little table at the gate, and a plate to receive the contributions of the pious traveller. As we approach the city, which stands on an elevated plain at the foot of the Andes, the scenery is improved by large gardens filled with fruit-trees; and at about a mile from the gates commences the *Alemda*, a beautiful promenade between rows of trees planted on the road-side, and offering a grateful shade, cooled by a gentle stream that murmurs by the path. Close to the gate of the city stands a small inn, the whole front of which is covered by a gorgeous painting of the Sacramento diggings—a mode of ornament peculiar to Lima. The noble gate through which we pass claims a moment’s notice, as it was built by an Irishman—bearing the euphonious name of Don Ambrosio O’Higgins—at one time a small shopkeeper in the city, then a Chilean soldier, and ultimately a marquis and viceroy of Peru.

The appearance of the “City of the Kings” (so called from its having been founded on the 6th of January, the celebration of the Epiphany) is not by this entrance very inviting, the houses presenting only blank walls pierced by narrow apertures defended by rusty iron bars. But as we advance into the more frequented streets the scene changes. Noble

churches and vast convents appear; the straight lines of the *cuadras* are broken by elegant shops; overhanging verandahs relieve the sameness of the houses; fountains play in the squares, and small streams of clear water sparkle through the centres of the principal streets. The spacious mansions of the wealthier inhabitants are perfectly secluded from observation by high walls, in which is built a small chamber with a latticed window, where the ladies often sit watching the passers-by. Entering through a lofty gateway, and a portico ornamented by brilliantly coloured paintings, we pass into a quiet yard, round which are the offices, coach-house, &c. Fronting the gateway are the principal rooms, reached by a short flight of broad steps, the windows open to the ground, the iron bars wrought into ornamental shapes and often gilded. In the rooms a low subdued light prevails highly favourable to the full enjoyment of the *siesta*, or afternoon sleep, a Spanish luxury which all the republicanism of the Limenno cannot induce him to forego; and to which he adds a zest by his custom of taking it swinging in a cool grass hammock opposite the open door-way.

Society in Lima is particularly unconstrained, and a generous hospitality pervades all classes. Every evening comes the *tertulia*—the house is thrown open for the admission of all friends who choose to come. The guitar, or, in some European families, the piano calls to the dance, in which the newly-entered visitor joins without ceremony. No introduction is necessary; the rays of a lamp placed at the entrance of the apartments give notice that the family is "at home," and serve as a sufficient invitation. The stranger enters without hesitation, and the fact of his being a foreigner ensures him a still more certain welcome, and a doubly hospitable reception. Slight refreshments are offered—as ices, sweetmeats, and cigars. You are treated by all present as a brother, and on taking leave, of your entertainer, are overwhelmed with protestations of regard, and informed that *La casa esta a la disposicion de usted*—"the house is at your disposal;" which is equivalent to an invitation to visit there whenever you think proper; an invitation, moreover,—unlike similar ones in England—given in perfect good faith. The formal party—the *baile de convite*,—is equally open to strangers, though it is an occasion of great importance to both the entertainer and his guests. The most remarkable feature about these parties is, that the populace of all classes have the right of *entree* to the court-yard; and this right is invariably exercised, the doors and windows being crowded with spectators, who pass very free but good-humoured remarks on the dress and appearance of the guests. The ladies display all their jewellery, both real and false, on such occasions, and heartily enjoy the pleasure of being gazed at by the crowd; whilst the *tapadas* are objects of especial remark and observation. These *tapadas* are ladies closely veiled in their long mantas, a disguise assumed sometimes from coquetry, but occasionally from a wish to avoid recognition by other visitors, or from want of means to provide a proper dress and ornaments. So closely is the idea of an intrigue associated with this dress, that a foreigner marrying a Lima lady, frequently stipulates that she shall renounce it from the day of marriage. At a party the *tapadas* do not often mingle with the dancers, but remain in an adjoining apartment, where, through the open folding-doors, they have a good view of the scene. Here the veiled ladies are visited by their friends, occasionally slightly removing their disguise for the benefit of some particular favourite. At these parties gaming is commonly introduced, and large sums are frequently won and lost. Deeply as all the South American republics are stained by this vice, Peru may claim an infamous pre-eminence among them. The ruinous passion affects all ranks and ages; and the priests may be classed with the most determined gamblers of the community. They are found in their long robes and rope girdles at the billiard-tables, cock-pits, and lottery-offices; and are never-failing attendants at the card-tables in the coffee-houses, stooping even to bet with the ignorant *cholos*, and openly gambling with the most depraved and vicious associates. The afternoon of the Sabbath is more particularly devoted to cock-fighting, a sport which is only

second to the bull-fight in the estimation of the Limenno. At every door in the lower districts of the city you see one or two cocks tied by the leg, and need not be surprised if, on entering the house, you discover one in each corner of its only room. The circus for cock-fighting is a handsome building, in the form of an amphitheatre, with an arena in the centre; though large, and capable of accommodating a considerable number of persons, it is usually filled to overflowing on Sunday, when from fifty to a hundred birds are not unfrequently killed. The cocks are armed with a single spur, a keen steel blade curved like a scimitar, and, armed with such a weapon, the first spring generally decides the contest. The bull-fights are held in a large circus erected for the purpose in the suburbs across the river Rimac. Every great festival is signalled by one of these brutal exhibitions, and during the season one usually takes place every Monday. No true Limenno would on any account miss one of these spectacles, and the most intense excitement prevails in the city previous to any extraordinary fight. The ladies take especial interest in these cruel amusements, and attend them in great numbers, applauding the bravery of the torridors, and rewarding every successful feat by loud expressions of approbation. Each principal trading company annually presents a bull to the people, and these animals are paraded through the city decorated with flowers and ribbons. The sports are more varied than in Spain, the bulls being attacked in many different modes; and the barbarities of the Spanish circus are greatly augmented by the ingenious and inhuman tortures customary in that of Lima. It is difficult to understand how so gentle and indolent a people as the Peruvians can find pleasure in such savage scenes, but the bull-fight has become a national custom, and in the intense gratification that it affords its cruelty is overlooked or forgotten. Perhaps to this early intimacy with these bloody spectacles may be attributed the wanton ferocity which has distinguished the civil wars of Peru, whose history, crowded as it is with legalised murders and tragic narratives of unarmed prisoners shot in cold blood can only excite in the mind of the civilised reader sentiments of deep horror and of sickening disgust.

The foreigner in Lima is astonished at the number of monks and friars who continually pass him in the streets—mean, vulgar-looking men, whose gowns and faces appear to be equally guiltless of any close acquaintance with soap and cold water, and who seem to divide their time between gambling in the *cafés* and lounging in the cigar-shops. Lima is proverbial for the extent and splendour of its ecclesiastical buildings, and though the churches have been repeatedly plundered during the revolutionary wars, they still retain some remnants of their former magnificence. The cathedral is rich in shrines containing beautiful wax figures of various saints, before which stand huge wax candles of fantastic shapes. Among the numerous offerings of plate and jewels are many little silver legs and arms presented on recovery from some accident or malady affecting those members. In the cathedral is a magnificent choir carved in wood, and the splendour of the grand altar there almost exceeds belief. The beautifully wrought golden tabernacle, sparkling with brilliant jewels, glitters in the blaze of many tapers placed in massive silver candelabra, and a row of elegant silver columns lends increased splendour to the *coup d'œil*. The church of San Augustin is chiefly remarkable for its outer decorations. The whole front is one mass of pillars, statues, scrolls, and similar ornaments, but they are all of plaster, and are now falling to decay. Among the fifty-four churches and convents which the city possesses it is difficult to particularise a few. They were formerly noted for their valuable collections of paintings, but most of these have now disappeared; and as an instance of the care and taste of the priests in such matters, I may remark that I noticed in one church a magnificent painting of the Madonna decorated with a large pearl necklace, and massive gold rings, holes having been cut in the canvas to admit these *tasteful* ornaments. By the side of the churches stand the vast and sombre convents. One of them, dedicated to St. Francisco, covers with its grounds an immense area; but the gardens, once highly cultivated, are now

neglected, and the diminished revenues of the monks have left hundreds of cells vacant. Within this convent is a small chapel, over the door of which stands an image of the Virgin; and the priests tell us that during the great earthquake of 1630, this figure turned towards the altar, and, devoutly kneeling, prayed for the safety of the doomed city. This intercession, say they, saved Lima from utter annihilation.

The monasteries of Santo Domingo, Santo Diego, San Augustin, and San Pedro, are all falling to decay; and in the *Plazuela de la Inquisicion*, a gloomy and almost tenantless building, is the only vestige of that once terrible institution. Yet Peru, in common with her sister republics, is deeply sunk in the religious superstitions, and no religion but Roman Catholicism is tolerated within her boundaries. A few years ago, the British minister in Lima, wishing to give to his countrymen an opportunity of attending religious worship in accordance with their faith and consciences, hired a house to be used as a Protestant chapel. The people on hearing this assembled in a mob, threatening to pull down the house, unless the landlord withdrew his consent and turned out the pestilent heretics. He was compelled to obey. Yet half the commerce, and nearly the whole of the manufactures of the country, are in the hands of these despised heretics; and to foreigners alone does Peru owe even her nominal place among nations. The most eminent officers of her patriot army were natives of Britain or of France. Her merchants are from England, Germany, or the United States; and her shopkeepers are Frenchmen or Italians. Her engineers, her sailors, and her artisans are of all nations; and even her Lilliputian fleet is in a great measure manned and officered by foreigners, among whom the Americans and English are conspicuous; though the difficulty of obtaining any pay from the government has latterly considerably diminished their number.

The religious processions of Lima are among the favourite amusements of the people; and all the members of the government, the whole army of the republic, and the swarming multitudes of priests and monks take part in them. The statues of the saints form a portion of the spectacle, and their rich decorations, with the gaudy dresses of their negro bearers, add to the gaiety of the scene. Numbers of tapadas, closely veiled, join the procession or mingle with the spectators, and as these constitute nearly the whole population, the streets are crowded with a motley assemblage of all colours, whose merry faces evince the joyous interest which they take in the brilliant pageant.

Among the popular recreations of the Limennos the fête of the Amancaes is perhaps the most curious and characteristic. At a short distance from the city, in the direction of the mountains, is a small plain which, during the greater part of the year, is a mere barren waste; but in the months of June and July, the night dews falling on the arid soil cover it with a beautiful carpet of verdure abounding with flowers, among which a handsome yellow lily grows in great profusion. On the 24th of June, St. John's day, Lima literally empties itself upon this plateau; the whole population rushes frantically to the Amancaes, wild with delight and anticipated pleasure. The road is thronged by parties of men and women, shouting, laughing, and dancing, in the exuberance of their joy. Negroes, mounted on spirited horses, ride at full speed along the road, exhibiting the most extraordinary feats of agility and horsemanship. Rapidly passing some other cavalier, they clasp him round the waist, and dragging him by main force from the saddle, carry him some distance on the road. In a similar manner they occasionally catch up an unsuspecting Indian or mulatto woman, and placing her before them on the saddle gallop rapidly away. The most extraordinary vehicles appear on the road, loaded with gaily-dressed cholos, the females glittering with gilt chains and heavy, gaudy ornaments. Amidst a party of equestrians, you see coloured women riding in the same fashion as men; or occasionally a group of cavaliers and fair ladies, distinguished by their graceful bearing, and the dexterous management of their beautiful horses. The ladies of Lima are celebrated as graceful horsewomen. They wear a short white riding-cloak, over which is thrown a splen-

did poncho; trousers trimmed with silver lace, from beneath which peep the delicately small feet enclosed in satin slippers; and an exceedingly pretty hat woven of very fine grass, and decorated with a broad streaming ribbon. On reaching the plain you find it covered with booths, where you can obtain provisions, spirits, or chicha, a pleasant liquor made from maize, and an especially favourite beverage with the coloured population. Every man and woman on the plain wears a bunch of the yellow lilies, and yet the ground is brightly covered with them. The huge mountains almost encircle the plateau, frowning in grim solidity upon the merry scene, and casting back in broken echoes the joyous shouts and peals of happy laughter which dare to invade their silent solitude. Here is a mirthful group seated on the grass busily discussing the provisions they have brought with them, and passing from mouth to mouth the huge tumbler of chicha, or the little goblet of Italia. There a jocund party form a ring for the *zambacueca*, the favourite dance of the Peruvians. The eternal guitar twangs out its monotonous notes, accompanied by the low chant of the women, and by the uncouth music of another performer, who beats time with a stick upon a wooden box. A well-built mulatto, throwing aside his hat and poncho, steps into the circle, leading a pretty mestiza, or a darker zamba, with her short, frizzled hair worked into a hundred little plaits, and decorated with newly-gathered flowers. The woman commences the dance, carrying in her hand a handkerchief, and slowly moving round her partner, who follows every footstep, gazing on his mistress with an indescribable air of timorous entreaty. By degrees the musicians and the dancers become more excited; the guitar twangs with redoubled energy; the woman, throwing into her countenance an expression of disdain, quickens her movements, and flies before the pursuing swain in the most graceful evolutions, shaking the handkerchief in his face as she passes. With steady perseverance he follows every turn, and soon the tired maid becomes herself the suppliant; vainly she now tries to avoid him by the most desperate springs and rapid changes; he presses more closely upon her, and at length, exhausted by her efforts, she sinks upon his outstretched arm, and drops the handkerchief in token of defeat; the surrounding crowd loudly applauding the triumph of the proudly-conscious victor.

As night approaches, the happy multitude return to the city, their horses and themselves covered with flowers; and as they pour along the Alameda, and across the bridge, the jocund laugh and sportive song ring out as merrily as though the much-loved festival was but commencing, and the long day of pleasure had left them still unwearied and unclayed.

Such scenes as these are the life-blood of the Peruvians, the only objects worth living for. The world of the Limenno is a stage, a bull-ring, a cock-circus, or a *paseo de Amancaes*. Give him these, varied by an occasional religious procession or a military spectacle, and he is perfectly contented; always provided that there is plenty of ice in the plaza, and that his cigar-case is well filled. Thus provided for, he is heedless of all else; satisfied that Lima is the greatest city in the world, and that he, himself, is the most graceful dancer it contains. It matters not to him that, though under a thoroughly democratic government, his country lags far behind the most absolute monarchies of Europe. He cares not to know that whilst art, literature, and science, are striding with unparalleled rapidity over the rest of the world—in Peru, in Bolivia, in Chili, in Ecuador, they are either stationary, or actually retrogressing. The prophecy of the liberator, Bolivar, that great destinies were in store for the Spanish republics, and that they would one day attain to an eminent position amongst the world's nations, seems to be as far from fulfilment as when it was uttered. And yet the cause rests only with themselves. The only obstacles to their advancement are in their own indolence and inactivity; in their inveterate love of pleasure, and their utter want of energy. What other country can vie with Peru in the number and the riches of its varied products? Her seas swarm with fish; the sperm whale rolls in her bays, and the fur seal inhabits her rocky islets. On her coast is an open mine of incalculable wealth, attracting to

her ports the ships of all countries, and pouring into her treasury vast sums of gold for which she neither toils nor spins. For thousands of years, on the barren guano islands, has this wealth been accumulating, and were it possible to transport the China and the Lobos rocks to the mouth of the Mersey or the Thames, all the gold of Australia would scarce suffice to purchase the rich fertilising matter which they bear.

On the banks of the streams which water her deserts grow the vine, the cotton plant, the sugar-cane, the olive, tobacco, maize, barley, lucern, and many other valuable products. Her plantations abound in rich fruits, among which are oranges, pomegranates, lemons, figs, plantains, guaves, dates, pattas, quinces, and many peculiar to the country. The deep valleys of the Sierra are rich in the most valuable productions,—indigo, dyewoods, gums, medicinal barks, and costly timber. Flocks of sheep in the Sierra supply large quantities of wool; and on the table lands of the Cordilleras, is produced the soft silky fleece of the alpaca, which the enterprise of a single Englishman has raised into an article of great commercial value. Copper, iron, lead, and gold are found in the mountains, and their prolific silver mines are celebrated all over the world. But when we turn from the country to the people, all is barren as their mountain-peaks, arid as their scorching deserts. Superstitious, apathetic, unstable, the Peruvian gives little hope of future progress. His moral, intellectual, and even physical condition, is most debased and degraded; and to him, the noble country, its magnificent scenery, and its vast treasures, are but as pearls cast before swine.

HIGH ALTAR OF NOTRE-DAME, AT HALLE, IN BELGIUM.

How little it often requires to render a thing famous, and to cause a name to roll from mouth to mouth, and thus earn universal reputation! Such is the case with the little town of Halle, in South Brabant. Though the extent of this town is too limited, its population too small, its productions too insignificant, and its historical traditions too uninteresting to insure its name a place in a school-boy's geography, it nevertheless attracts the attention of the world, causes the artist to turn out of his road to visit it, saves the engraver's etching point many an idle day, and adds to the graceful and elegant appearance of our magazines and of our albums. And why? Because artistic genius has there worked out its inspirations, and left its trace behind it; because the architect, the sculptor, and the painter, have all been there to show the world, in the legacy they have left it—a cathedral—to what a height their different arts can rise.

From what we have just said, it may be concluded that Halle owes all its celebrity to its Cathedral. Seen from a distance, however, this structure, which was begun in 1341, and terminated in 1409, appears in no way imposing from the size of its proportions; and its exterior has nothing remarkable about it, with the exception of a tower, which is square as far up as two-thirds of its height, and then becomes octangular, the whole being covered with reliefs and embrasures. The architecture of the interior is most elegant, while the decorations are profusely elaborate. The vaulted roof of the nave, which is divided into three parts, is supported by pillars, the verves of which are gracefully arranged in clusters. The choir presents the most splendid appearance: bright coloured windows, open-worked niches, statues, statuettes, and a thousand other ornaments of various kinds, there meet the eye and produce the most wonderful effect. But the part that crowns all is the High Altar, which is a perfect *chef-d'œuvre*, its general arrangement being full of grandeur, while the details are executed in the most minute and delicate manner. In the upper part of it is seen an image of St. Martin, under whose protection the church was placed at the time of its foundation. At the end of the fourteenth century, however, the name was changed to that of Notre-Dame, in consequence of certain events, which we will now briefly relate. The Countess Alix, wife of Jean d'Avesnes, had pre-

sented one of the chapels of the church with a little statue which she had inherited from St. Elizabeth of Hungary. This statue, which was an image of the Virgin, had, it was said, already worked a great number of miracles. The faithful rushed in crowds to offer up their devotions to it, and, as the miracles continued, the fame of the statue became so great, that people began to designate the church by the name of the Virgin only, until it was finally placed under her protection.

While viewing this part of the church, the mind is lost in wonder at the immense amount of patience which must have been expended on the intricate details, on the tracery, on the open work, and on the sculpture executed there. The whole, which is as imposing a work as the hand of man will ever perfect, is made up of parts, each of which is a masterpiece in itself, that fascinate the eye and engrave the name of Halle on the memory of all who visit its cathedral.

Nearly all catholic churches possess a treasure: that of Notre-Dame at Halle, is perhaps the richest that exists in Belgium. It is placed under the protection of the first magistrate of the town, and it would be almost impossible to describe the jewels of all forms and materials of which it is composed. In the chapel of Notre-Dame, is seen a splendid collection of crosses, lamps, coats of mail, standards, moustrances, chalices, and gold, silver, and ivory figures, all presents from kings and princes of every country. One of the most magnificent objects contained in this treasure, is a silver-gilt moustrance presented by Henry VIII., king of England, a little time before he succeeded from the church of Rome.

The miraculous statue is carried in a solemn procession which takes place once a year, on the first Sunday in September, the day of the *kermesse*, by twelve delegates from the neighbouring towns which were the first to place themselves under its protection. The inhabitants of Liege also come once a year in a procession to pay a visit to the church at Halle.

In one of the side chapels, may be seen a Latin inscription, in which it is stated that Gustus Lipse, the author of a book written in honour of the Virgin of Halle, bequeathed his pen to Notre-Dame.

A MIDNIGHT RIDE IN '98.

PART II.

I FOUND myself tramping on foot through a wild mountainous district, within half an hour after the occurrence described at the close of my last chapter. I was surrounded by the party who had so abruptly arrested my progress—the leader, who was styled by his companions Tom Hackett, being mounted on my mare, and maintaining a rigid silence. With the exception of occasional remarks upon the state of the roads, and the genealogy and worldly wealth of the farmers on the road along which they were marching, little was said by any of them. Immediately after my ignominious overthrow, my pockets had been rifled of their contents, and, amongst other things, of letters from my father to Mr. Gilbert, in which the conduct and character of the rebels was commented upon in no very favourable terms. This discovery, though I was unable at that time to perceive its importance in relation to my own prospects, was anything but agreeable, as it led to my being set down as a spy and deceiver, and liable to all the consequences which such a character entails upon him who is found bearing it in a time of war. That weary night stamped itself too truly on my memory ever to be forgotten. I think we must have tramped on at least twenty miles along rough mountain roads, stormy and precipitous, my thin town boots torn, my feet blistered and bleeding, and my bones aching with fatigue. Once or twice we stopped at cabins on the way-side; the inmates were rudely roused, and compelled to furnish us with any food which they had at command, and this, with copious draughts of whiskey and water, partially supported my faltering strength. When the sun began to peep above the horizon, I was blindfolded, and after another hour's march, the bandage was taken off, and I found myself at the door of a long, low-lying thatched farm-